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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the need for a provincewide literacy hotline in Alberta, Canada, and if needed, the configuration of services for establishing the hotline. Data were gathered through two surveys. In order to find out what an Alberta literacy hotline service might look like, a cross-Canada telephone and mail survey was conducted. Different questionnaires were designed and distributed to 217 administrators, instructors, and students in literacy and English as a Second Language courses in Alberta; 156 questionnaires were returned (72 percent). The cross-Canada telephone survey of approximately 10 persons who had been involved with literacy hotlines confirmed 7 functions such hotline services might perform: refer interested adults to literacy programs; refer interested adults to programs in English as a Second Language; refer potential volunteers to programs; provide general literacy information to the interested public; distribute literacy information to the literacy community; provide advice to literacy workers; and raise public awareness and understanding of adult literacy issues. It also revealed that literacy hotlines are a relatively new phenomenon, vary widely in form and function, can certainly fail, and generally thrive on advertising. The survey of Alberta gathered information on the present state of affairs related to each of the services a hotline could provide. From the findings of this survey, it was concluded that there does seem to be a need for a provincial hotline service in Alberta, but only if it takes a certain shape, making its first priority public awareness and understanding, and its secondary concern referring students and volunteers to programs. After establishing and defining the need, the next step is to determine whether there is enough funding for enough years to warrant starting the service. (The survey instruments and 11 references are included in this report.) (KC)

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Needs Assessment for a Provincial Literacy Hotline Service

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Executive Summary

It is the purpose of this study to provide the AAAL Board with information and recommendations to help the Board decide whether to proceed with a province-wide hotline, and, if so, what configuration of services to establish.

To gather data, two surveys were conducted. In order to find out what an Alberta literacy hotline service *might* look like, a cross-Canada telephone and mail survey was conducted. Different questionnaires were designed and distributed to more than 200 literacy and ESL administrators, instructors, and students in Alberta.

The cross-Canada survey confirmed seven functions the hotline services might perform. It also revealed that literacy hotlines are a relatively new phenomenon, vary widely in form and function, can certainly fail, and generally thrive on advertising.

The more major survey of Alberta gathered information on the present state of affairs relating to each of the services a hotline could provide. As a general conclusion, there does seem to be a need for a provincial hotline service in Alberta, but only if it takes a certain shape, making its first priority public awareness and understanding, and its secondary concern referring students and volunteers to programs.

After establishing and defining the need, the next step is to determine whether there is enough funding for enough years to warrant starting the service.

Introduction

One of the principal goals of the Alberta Association for Adult Literacy (AAAL) is to facilitate province-wide networking and communication about literacy. In April 1993, AAAL applied to the National Literacy Secretariat in Ottawa for funding "to establish a centre with a 1-800 number to serve as an information clearing house in Alberta..., [and] to promote the 1-800 number..." (Alberta Association, p. 1). Funding was granted. However, AAAL then wanted to place more emphasis on "front-end" work, that is, clarifying the need for and the long-term feasibility of the project. Bell Education and Consulting submitted a proposal to do this work, and the AAAL Board contracted the company to do the first part, the needs assessment.

This needs assessment attempts to answer two questions:

- What *might* an Alberta literacy hotline service look like?
- Is there a need for the services a provincial literacy hotline could provide, and if so, which of those services is most needed in Alberta?

At first glance it seems obvious what a hotline would look like: it is a telephone with a toll-free number and a literacy worker to answer it and refer students to programs. Yet the variety of literacy hotlines in Canada is tremendous, probably because if a literacy hotline is conceptualized as a service rather than a telephone, the possibilities for it expand considerably. It is important to determine what configuration of services would be most appropriate for Alberta.

It is even more important to determine the need for the service. A provincial hotline is not a 12-month project that affects a small number of people, but an ongoing service that many people come to rely on. Also, depending on its configuration, a hotline can require substantial funding year after year. Its success can be extremely valuable; its demise can be disappointing and wasteful.

It is crucial to find out the extent to which a provincial hotline is actually needed, and, if it is needed, what shape it should take. It is the purpose of

this report to provide the AAAL Board with information and recommendations to help the Board decide whether to proceed with the province-wide hotline, and, if so, what configuration of services to establish.

Method

The first step was to telephone six key literacy people involved in some way with the hotline project. The purpose was to clarify their concerns and establish a knowledge base on which to conduct the rest of this inquiry. Then, following Statistics Canada's advice (Platek, Pierre-Pierre, & Stevens, 1985) to form a survey team, a former University of Calgary instructor was hired as a research assistant. The Mount Royal College Business department provided input regarding data processing.

It was decided to answer both research questions primarily through surveys. The Alberta survey was conducted during March 1994, a time when the provincial government was continuing major budget cuts and when literacy workers generally did not know what their budget allocation would be for the next fiscal year. In addition, 1994 was designated Year of the Family. Both of these contextual factors may have influenced survey results. The cross-Canada survey was conducted in February, 1994.

Cross-Canada Survey

In order to find out what an Alberta literacy hotline service *might* look like, a cross-Canada telephone and mail survey was conducted. Having been Director of the literacy hotline service in Calgary for two years, I had some idea what functions a province-wide hotline could perform, but I wanted to establish a firmer, less idiosyncratic basis for constructing the survey questionnaire to be sent to Albertans. Therefore, unstructured interviews where conducted by telephone with hotline operators in the six provinces with provincial hotlines. In Ontario, where regional hotlines cover the province, two regional coordinators recommended by Scott Dickson of ABC Canada were interviewed. Because former hotlines can be as instructive as thriving operations, two people from Saskatchewan and two from Newfoundland were also contacted.

Conducting the interviews established what functions a hotline service might perform and what questions it was important to get detailed

answers to. A short questionnaire was created (see Appendix A) and sent by fax or mail to eight hotline coordinators. Upon receiving the eight completed questionnaires, a summary description was created for each hotline and some of the information was condensed into a table. This write-up was faxed or mailed to all participants for their information and for their comments on the description of their operation. Revisions were made as necessary.

Alberta Survey

In order to ascertain whether a hotline is needed, and if so, what shape it should take, questionnaires were designed and distributed to adult literacy and ESL coordinators, instructors (see Appendix B), and students

Survey Design

Unfortunately, a needs assessment is not as simple as asking Alberta literacy workers and students whether they need a hotline. For instance, asking prospective students whether they would phone a literacy hotline, or asking instructors whether they would refer students to the service, simply invites bias. In Statistics Canada's *Development and Design of Survey Questionnaires*, Platek, Pierre-Pierre, and Stevens (1985) include the following statement in a list of bias problems:

> [One] bias is the wishful thinking that can occur if respondents are asked about their future behaviour plans, or are asked about hypothetical situations ("what would you do if...?"). In general these sorts of questions should be avoided, as they seldom yield answers indicative of the actual behaviour once the time-period is over, or when the hypothetical situation in fact comes to pass. (p. 38)

A questionnaire was designed to minimize this bias and to provide AAAL with reliable information. The keys to the design of this questionnaire were (a) determining the possible functions of a hotline service, and (b) the definition of need. First, seven possible functions of a hotline were identified. Then, for each of these, questions were formulated to gather information on current conditions. This present state of affairs was later compared to the desired state of affairs for each possible function. The desired state of affairs for each service is either generally agreed upon among people in the literacy field or it is up to the AAAL Board to decide.

"A gap or discrepancy between a present state of affairs (PSA) and a desired state of affairs (DSA)" (Sork, 1990, p. 2) is a need.

Here is an example. One function a hotline could provide is to refer students to programs. The desired state of affairs is that programs be full and that an inordinate amount of energy not have been expended to make them that way. To find out the present state of affairs, items 2 and 3 of the questionnaire asked administrators how full their programs were and how much effort it had taken to reach that enrollment. Examining the discrepancy between the DSA and the PSA suggests the degree of need.

Three of the 15 items on the questionnaire, however, did not stem from such a rationale. Question 1 was designed to enable separation of ESL and literacy responses. In consultation with the current President of AAAL, a decision was made early on to include ESL administrators, instructors, and students in the survey, first because we believed it was better to be inclusive rather than exclusive, second because AAAL and ATESL (Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language) have had increased contact in the last four years, and, finally, because ESL students are going to call a literacy hotline. At the same time, however, ESL may not be a part of any literacy hotline service; therefore, ESL responses were tabulated separately. Administrators, instructors, and students in the literacy field were lumped together, and the same for the ESL field, as the research purpose was to gather information from the communities in general, not to examine differences among segments.

Question 10 asked people to describe a desired state of affairs. It asked them to rank seven possible functions of a hotline. Thus, people had to assume there was a hotline, assume that not all functions could receive equal attention, and then decide what functions were most important. This question also acted as triangulation on many other survey questions. For example, if most respondents said they were "fairly well informed" about Alberta literacy news (Question 11), and if respondents also ranked "provid[ing] specific literacy information to literacy workers" as relatively unimportant (Question 10), then it can be assumed with increased confidence that supplying information to Alberta literacy workers is not an important function of a hotline service.

Question 15, the final item, asked people to place check marks beside the three issues that they thought would be the most important for adult literacy (or ESL) in Alberta over the upcoming three years. The list of issues was developed with care, and a testament to its quality is the few people who resorted to writing in the "Other" blank an issue not included in the list. To create the list, the results of a major needs assessment survey of literacy coordinators in the province (Stanley, 1992) was amalgamated with a smaller survey of the same group conducted the following year (Corcoran, 1993). Then the findings of a study of rural literacy in Alberta (Bell, 1991a) and the results of my informal telephone survey of approximately two dozen literacy workers in southern Alberta were included. The resulting list was crossed with the results of a survey of 31 selected Canadian literacy professionals (Barker, 1992). The resulting list was pilot tested with selected Alberta practitioners, and subsequently modified slightly

A variety of other design decisions aimed at producing a quality questionnaire. The options in both Question 10 and Question 15 were randomly ordered in an effort to reduce bias. Also, questionnaire items were divided into those for administrators only and those for instructors as well. This was an attempt to have people read only questions they could answer. Because it was important that the questionnaire readily make sense to respondents on its own, the survey items were ordered in what seemed a sensible flow. The wording of each question went through five drafts in an effort to minimize misunderstanding by respondents. A draft of the survey was sent to eight literacy and ESL professionals for critique. Generally, they endorsed the design and made some helpful suggestions regarding wording and organization. The final graphic design and layout decisions paid particular attention to four factors: length, appearance, readability, and data handling. The questionnaire was short in an attempt to encourage people to complete it. A creamy yellow paper and dark blue ink were chosen to create the impression of a serious, respectable effort without being cold and intimidating. This colour combination was also chosen because, with a 10-point type selected to save space, clarity was important, and a dark blue/purple on yellow is the most easy-to-read combination. Finally, all places where people were to place their check marks or numbers were aligned with the left margin, thus making the data easier to compile and reducing the chance of error in tabulation.

Following the principle of asking people only the questions they could answer, the main questionnaire was modified for ESL and for literacy students by extracting questions 1, 10, 13, 14, and 15 from the main survey instrument. Instructors distributing the questionnaires to their students were encouraged to discuss the questions in class, and tutors were requested to work through the questions with their students as necessary.

Population and Sampling

The population for this survey was Alberta literacy and ESL administrators, instructors, and students. The following lists were sampled:

- Literacy Coordinators of Alberta membership list
- AAAL membership list
- *English as a Second Language: A Directory of ESL Program and Services for Adults in Alberta, March, 1993*
- *Adult Literacy Programs in Alberta.*

The membership list for the Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language was not made available for this survey. One-fifth of each list was randomly selected to receive questionnaires by post.

A good return rate was a top priority. Gay (1987) maintains that "if your percentage of returns is not at least 70%, the validity of your conclusions will be weak" (p. 201). Given the traditionally low rates of return for literacy questionnaires, and given a few problems with mailing lists, such an excellent return rate seemed unlikely. Numerous measures were taken to increase the return rate: a carefully crafted cover letter, a questionnaire that was fairly short and clear, and return dates that were neither so tight as to discourage nor so loose as to allow people to forget. Furthermore, AAAL donated prizes, and the AAAL and LCA newsletters carried timely reminders to return the questionnaires. In addition, a second copy of the questionnaire and a spirited cover letter were sent to everyone who had not responded by the first deadline.

Distribution

In the first mailing, 217 surveys were sent, with covering letter and self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of the survey. Two weeks later, another copy of the survey, a new covering letter, and another self-addressed, stamped envelope were sent to the people who had not responded to the initial mailing.

Student surveys were distributed by the following literacy and ESL workers who I thank for their essential cooperation: Wendy Brown (Warner), Fern Derie (Oyen), Janice Johnson (Nanton), Helen Lemay (Trochu), Mary Norton (Edmonton), Meredith Ottoson and colleagues (Lakeland region), Anne Trussler (Calgary), and Gloria Whitehead (Ft. McLeod).

Data Handling

Responses were tabulated by hand and the results entered in a spreadsheet. Percentages were calculated. Because Question 10 was a ranking question where the items were not on an interval scale, averaging ratings of each item was inappropriate. Consequently, for each of the seven items, the number of first place rankings were counted, the number of second place rankings, and so on. Results for the literacy questionnaires are in Appendix B, and for the ESL questionnaires, in Appendix C.

Results

Cross-Canada Survey

Adult Literacy Contact Centre
622, 510 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8
Hotline: 1-800-663-1293
Telephone: (604) 684-0624
Fax: (604) 684-8520
Contact: Linda Hackett, Coordinator;
Sandy Middleton, Information Officer

Started in 1987, the Adult Literacy Contact Centre has handled approximately 6,000 calls a year for the last three years. The Contact Centre has a full-time coordinator, a full-time information officer, a part-time secretary, and a part-time newsletter editor. It uses the National Adult Literacy Database, its in-house database, and print material such as institutions' catalogues as an information base, which is updated continuously. Last year, the vast majority of calls were from the general public seeking information about literacy. Volunteers comprised 14% of the callers, and students 11%. The Contact Centre describes itself as

> a clearinghouse for provincial adult basic education information regarding programs, demographic data, community developments, resources, adult education theory, funding sources, literacy events, conferences, etc., for the benefit of potential learners, adult educators and volunteers, community-based groups, social service agencies, business, the media and other sectors and individuals in B.C. (Hackett, 1991, p. 1)

Most learners who call have obtained the 1-800 number from (1) another agency, (2) the telephone book, or (3) the television and radio ads organized by the B.C. Literacy Public Awareness Campaign. The majority of volunteers in 1992/93 heard of the hotline through these radio and T.V. ads. In the 1993/94 fiscal year, the Contact Centre was funded 55% by the B.C. Ministry of Skills, Training, and Labour, and 45% by the National Literacy Secretariat.

Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba

107 Pulford St.
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1P6
Hotline, Telephone, and Fax: (204) 452-3139
Contact: Suzanne Henry, Coordinator, LWAM

When ABC Canada organized "the Learn page" in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book in 1993, the Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba (LWAM) added a hotline function to its operation. According to Donna Veldhoen, who has acted as the Coordinator's assistant, "We have no specific plans for the service, but we felt that it was our mandate, so we basically added it to the Coordinator's job" (personal communication, February, 1994). LWAM's mandate involves public awareness, advocacy, information exchange, and professional development for the province's literacy workers.

The hotline accepts collect calls from rural areas. It uses the *Directory of Adult Literacy Programs in Manitoba* as its data base. This resource is updated formally once a year, and informally as the LWAM office hears about changes. The hotline service, which has been in operation for less than a year, receives 85% of its funding from federal/provincial grants and 15% from LWAM dues and donations.

Literacy Access Network
365 Bloor St. E., suite 1003
Toronto, ON M4W 3L4
Hotline: (416) 961-5557
Telephone: (416) 961-4013
Fax: (416) 961-8138
Contact: Jill Barber

Started in 1989, the hotline service employs two full-time staff who answer about 3,500 calls a year. They use, and sell, the *Greater Toronto Literacy Referral Guide*, published annually, and updated three times a year. ESL students (37%), literacy students (30%), volunteers (17%), and the general public (including literacy workers) (16%) are major callers. The operation provides a full range of services, except it is not intended to provide advice to literacy workers. It publishes a quarterly newsletter. It is funded primarily (70%) by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, Learning and Employment Preparation Branch.

Literacy Council of Durham Region
40 King St. E.
Oshawa, ON L1H 1B3
Hotline: 1-800-263-0993
Telephone and Fax: (905) 434-5441
Contact: Wanda Pitchforth, Coordinator

There are 22 different literacy providers in the region, and one of these, the Literacy Council, houses and operates the hotline. Although the operation is varied, the salient function is to help students, who are often frustrated, clarify what they want, escape the telephone run-around, and find the most appropriate program through one call. The Coordinator answers the phone during regular work hours, and refers students based on the organization's referral book, which is updated on a continuous basis. The office handles about 2500 calls per year, 27% from volunteers, 27% from the general public, and 25% from literacy students. The principal funding source is the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

Literacy Partners of Quebec
3040 Sherbrooke St. West
Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1A4
Hotline and Telephone: (514) 931-8731, extension 1413
Fax: (514) 931-5181
Contact: Isa Helfield

Housed at Dawson College, this new hotline has a Coordinator who answers the phone 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday to Friday. A two-year-old directory of programs is used for the hotline's two functions: referring students and volunteers to appropriate programs. So far, 89% of the calls have been from students, and 10% from volunteers. Funding is from the Federal government.

New Brunswick Committee on Literacy
900 Hanwell Road
Fredericton, NB E3B 6A2
Hotline: 1-800-563-2211
Telephone: (506) 457-1227
Fax: (506) 459-0007
Contact: Jan Greer

Started on September 8, 1993, the hotline is answered by the Promotions Coordinator, but has a call forward function so that volunteers with referral books are able to answer incoming calls at home if necessary. The directory of literacy resources in New Brunswick is updated about every three months. Half of the calls on the hotline come from students, and almost half (45%) from volunteers. The Committee on Literacy hopes the hotline will offer a full range of services (except providing advice to literacy workers), but the operation is currently relying primarily on donations.

Nova Scotia Department of Education, Literacy Section
Halifax Campus, Nova Scotia Community College
1825 Bell Road
Halifax, NS B3H 2Z4
Hotline: 1-424-7544
Telephone: (902) 424-8421
Fax: (902) 424-0553
Contact: Lynne Wells-Orchard

The Department of Education Literacy Information Line has a Literacy Facilitator in the Halifax-Dartmouth area who answers the phone 7:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday to Friday (answering machine at other times). Calls from outside the metropolitan area are re-directed to the other eight Literacy Facilitators throughout the province. Since 1990/91, the hotline has received between 200 and 300 calls per year. Forty percent of these calls are from volunteer tutors, 35% from students, and about 25% from the general public. However, the hotline receives more calls from "the field" (i.e., literacy facilitators) than all the rest of the calls combined. Thus, while the Department of Education-funded hotline provides a wide range of services, it is principally used for communication among literacy professionals in the province.

PEI Literacy Councils
Box 400
Charlottetown, PEI C1A 7K7
Hotline: 1-800-566-4490
Telephone: (902) 368-3620
Fax: (902) 628-8178
Contact: Laura Mair

Each year a professional answering service is contracted to take calls on the province-wide toll-free number, thus offering 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year service. For calls from students (50%), operators take only the first name, phone number, and area; for volunteers (40%), they take full names, complete addresses, and phone numbers. They pass this information on to the literacy coordinator in the appropriate area. The service handles 300 to 500 calls a year in meeting the Council's purposes of referring students and volunteers to programs. For the past

three years, the service has been funded through revenue raised by the annual P.E.I. Peter Gzowski Golf Tournament.

The Northwest Territories and the Yukon do not have literacy hotlines. Alberta (Calgary), Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland had hotlines but do not now. Defunct hotlines can be as instructive as thriving operations. The Calgary Adult Literacy Awareness Project was joint-funded for two years through the National Literacy Partnership Strategy. The project served the city of Calgary. In the 1991 calendar year, the hotline portion of the project received just over 1,000 calls. Thirty-eight percent were from literacy students, 26% from ESL students, 21% from volunteers, and 14% from the general public. The project ended when the original funding stopped and no substantial alternative funding could be found.

Saskatchewan Education started a hotline service in 1988 as part of a literacy promotional campaign featuring television ads. According to one of the literacy professionals involved in the project, the hotline slowly died for several reasons. Personnel changed, and there was no literacy coordinator per se. Also, it was fairly expensive for the service provided. It averaged about one call per day, some calls being marginally related to adult literacy. Furthermore, whoever answered the telephone sometimes did not know the answers to questions: either the person was not highly knowledgeable about the literacy field or the question required extremely detailed local knowledge. Neither person interviewed would readily support a 1-800 number for the province, and one interviewee added that he would ask first and foremost what a hotline service would do besides give out telephone numbers.

The Literacy Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador shut its doors in early 1994, and obtaining any solid information from it was difficult. According to the former President, Bob Evans, the hotline began in August 1990, less energy was expended on it as of September 1993, and it ended when the Coalition shut down a few months later. Evans said that calls increased each fall and spring, and whenever an advertising campaign was conducted. He also emphasized how the hotline grew from focusing on students, to helping volunteer tutors, to developing a programs list, to providing updates for the National Adult Literacy

Database. Another Newfoundland literacy worker interviewed speculated that the Coalition's internal problems may have adversely affected the hotline. He also wondered about the quality of referrals, for he had received calls from people whose questions had not been answered satisfactorily by the hotline.

Table 1

Brief Description of Selected Literacy Hotlines Across Canada

Hotline	Functions* (see below)	Calls per Year	Principal Callers	Principal Funding
BC Literacy Contact Centre	1,2,3,4,5,7	6,000	General public	Joint Fed/Prov
Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba	1-7	In first year	First year in progress	Joint Fed/Prov
Literacy Access Network, Toronto	1,2,3,4,5,7, 8	3,500	ESL student Literacy students	Prov
Literacy Council of Durham Region	1-7	2,500	Volunteers, Public, Literacy students	Prov
Literacy Partners of Quebec	1,3	In first year	Literacy students	Fed
New Brunswick Committee on Literacy	1,2,3,4,5,7	In first year	Literacy students, Volunteers	Dona-tions
Nova Scotia Department of Education	1-8	250	Lit. professionals, Volunteers, Literacy students, Public	Prov
PEI Literacy Councils	1,3	300-500	Literacy students, Volunteers	PGI Golf Tourna ments

*Functions hotline services could perform

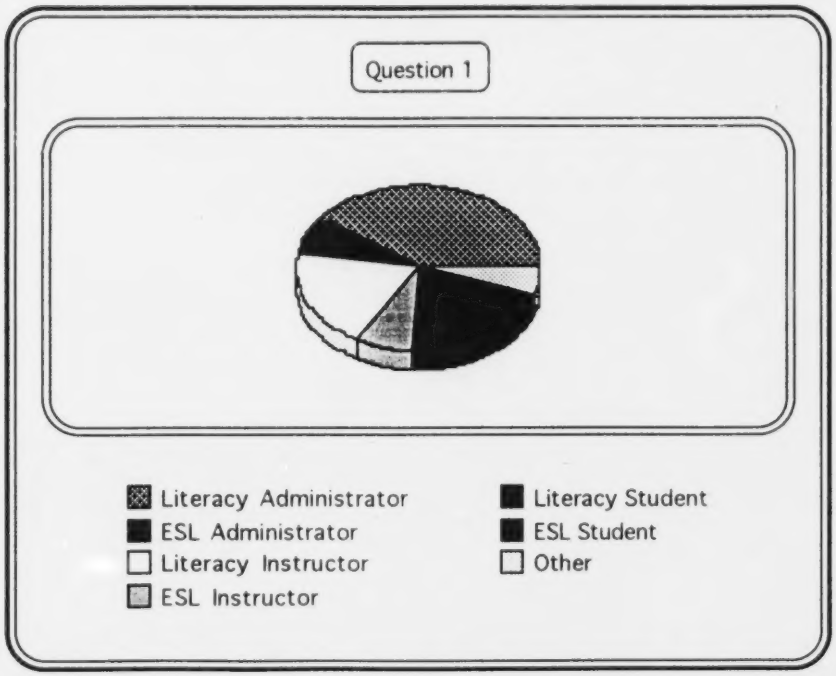
1. Refer interested adults to literacy programs
2. Refer interested adults to English as a Second Language programs
3. Refer potential volunteers to programs
4. Provide general literacy information to the interested public
5. Distribute literacy information to the literacy community
6. Provide advice to literacy workers
7. Raise public awareness and understanding of the adult literacy issue
8. Other

Alberta Survey

Questionnaires were mailed to 217 people, and 156 questionnaires were completed and returned. The response rate of 72% is extremely good and provides reliable data which can greatly increase the validity of the conclusions drawn. (For a complete set of data, see Appendices B and C.) Most student questionnaires were not mailed to individuals but were distributed and collected by instructors, tutors, or coordinators. In this manner, an additional 10 literacy student questionnaires and an additional 23 ESL student questionnaires were collected.

Forty percent of responses came from literacy coordinators or administrators (see Figure 1). The next largest group was literacy instructors and tutors; they accounted for 20% of the responses. In all, 69% of the responses came from people in the literacy field, and 29% from those in the ESL field.

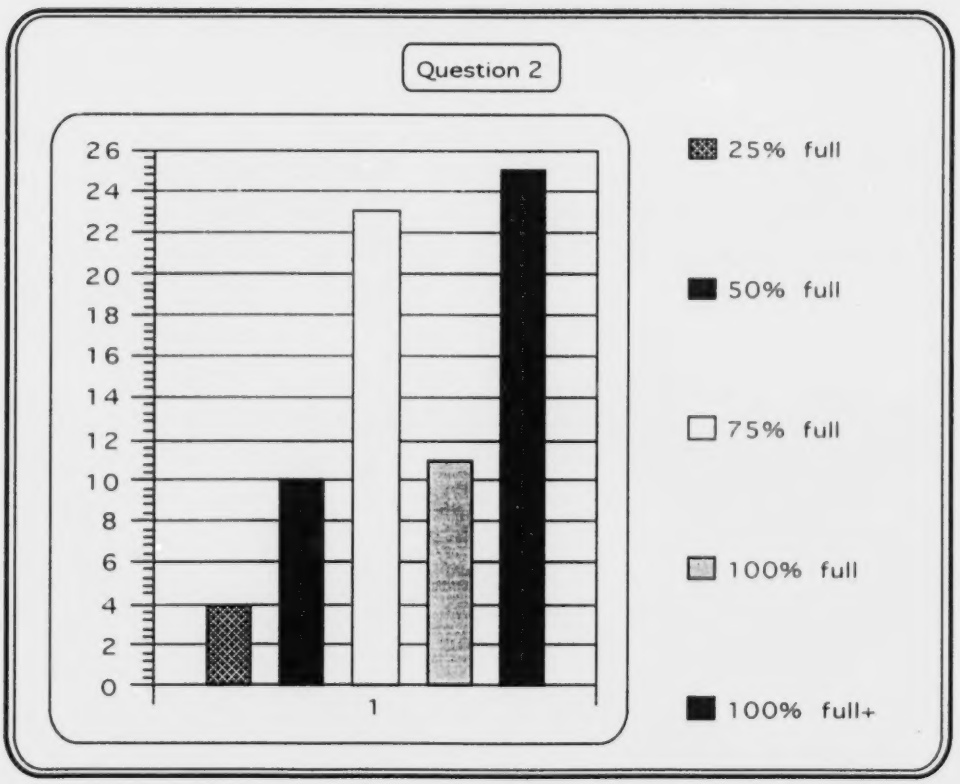
Figure 1: Group Responses as Proportions of All Responses



The following discusses only literacy programs, not ESL programs. The pattern of response from people in the ESL field to the questionnaire was almost identical to the pattern of response from the literacy field.

Approximately half of the programs are full or are full with potential students waiting (see Figure 2). The other half of the programs are not full: 32% estimate that they are three-quarters full, 14% say they are half full, and 5% say they are only one-quarter capacity. Most of the programs not full are rural. Even though impossible to label every returned questionnaire rural or urban, still 70% of the programs not full are identifiably rural. Programs typically (40%) made a moderate effort to recruit students. Most people (65%) detect no increase in calls to their programs as a result of ABC Canada's current ad campaign.

Figure 2: The Number of Sampled Literacy Programs at Different Percentages of Enrollment Capacity



In a similar vein, nearly half (41%) of the respondents say their programs have all the volunteers needed. If not, they report having approximately 75% of the desired number. Programs most commonly (35%) report making a moderate effort to recruit volunteers.

Although one quarter of respondents receive no calls each week from the general public wanting information about adult literacy, the majority (55%) receive 1–3 such calls. Three quarters of the people handling such calls say that they have fairly adequate or definitely adequate resources to give satisfactory assistance. One quarter are not so certain. Regardless, most literacy workers (63%) say that calls from the general public regarding literacy do not interfere at all with their other work.

Respondents rate referring students to programs and impoving public awareness and understanding as the most important functions of a hotline service (see Table 2).

Table 2: Ranking of Seven Possible Hotline Functions

1. Refer students to programs (55 first-place rankings)
2. Raise public awareness of literacy issues (29 first-place rankings)
3. Increase public understanding of literacy issues (13 first-place rankings and 30 second-place rankings)
4. Refer potential volunteers to programs (although 27 ranked this second, the same number ranked it fourth, and almost the same number ranked it last)
5. Provide general literacy information to the general public (most frequent ranking was fifth)
6. Provide specific information to literacy workers (most frequent ranking was sixth)
7. Provide educational advice to literacy workers

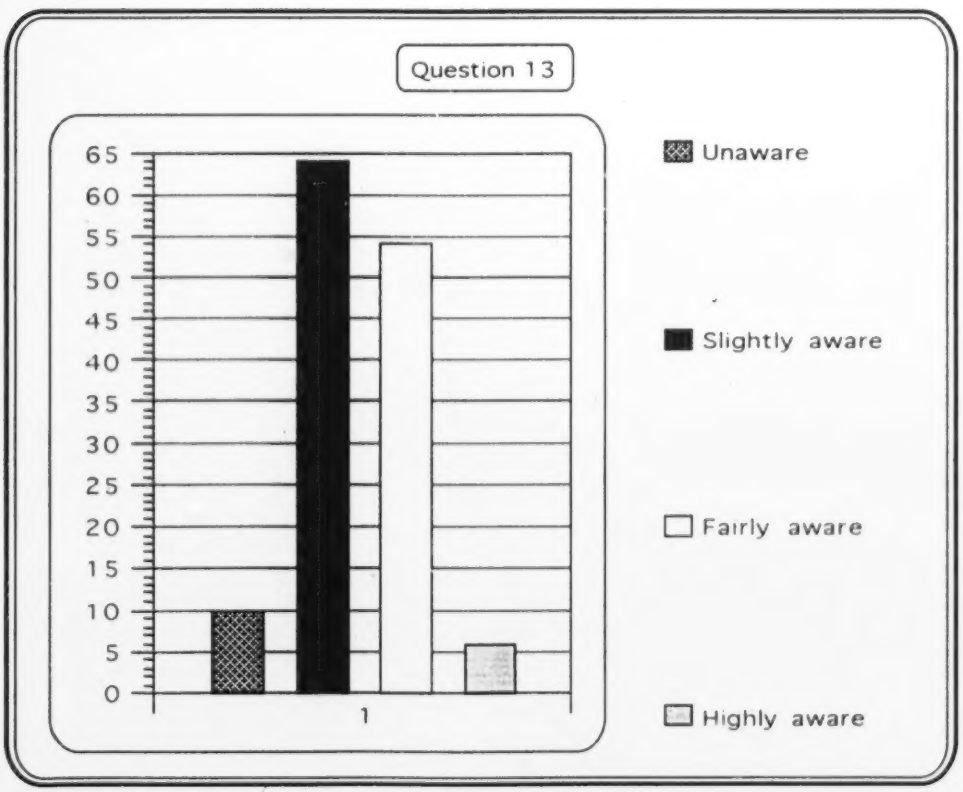
The majority (56%) of literacy workers say that they are well informed about Alberta literacy news. Twenty-two percent, however, say they

are poorly informed about such things as job opportunities, new publications, upcoming events, funding sources, and professional development opportunities.

In the last month, say half the respondents, they have never faced an adult literacy problem where they felt they had inadequate access to professional consultation. The other half has, most of them running into such problems only 1–3 times in the month.

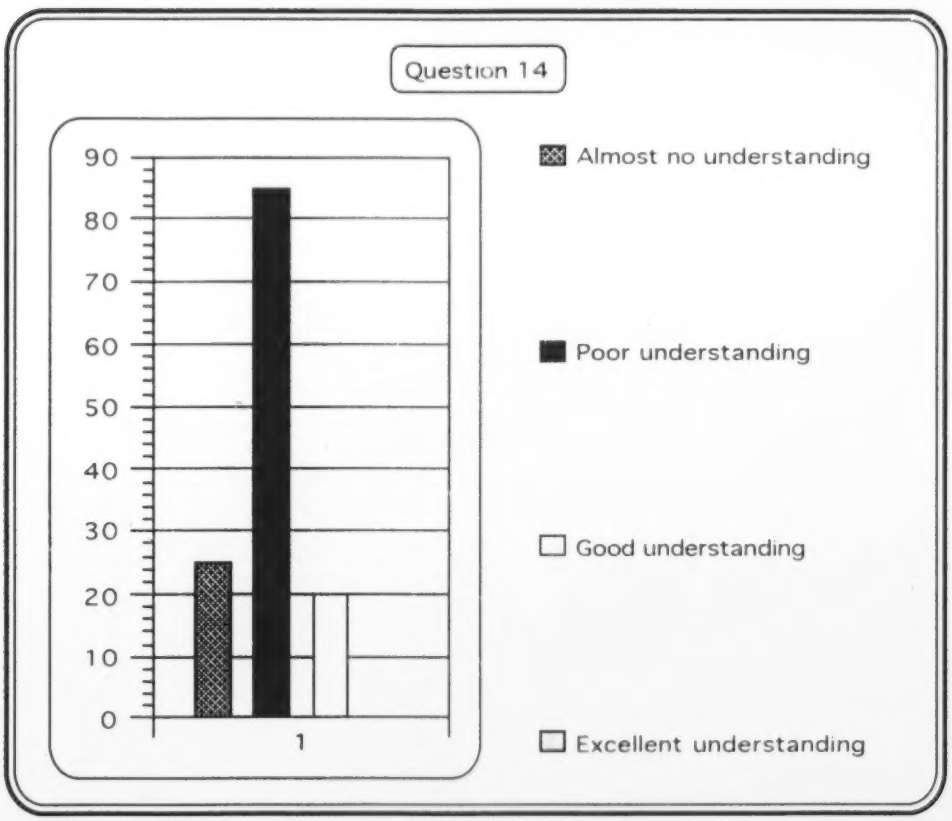
While 45% of respondents view their local community as fairly aware or highly aware of the issue of adult literacy, 55% say that their community is only slightly aware or unaware of the issue (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Perceptions of Public Awareness of Adult Literacy Issues



A full 85% of respondents say that their community has almost no understanding or poor understanding of adult literacy (see Figure 4).

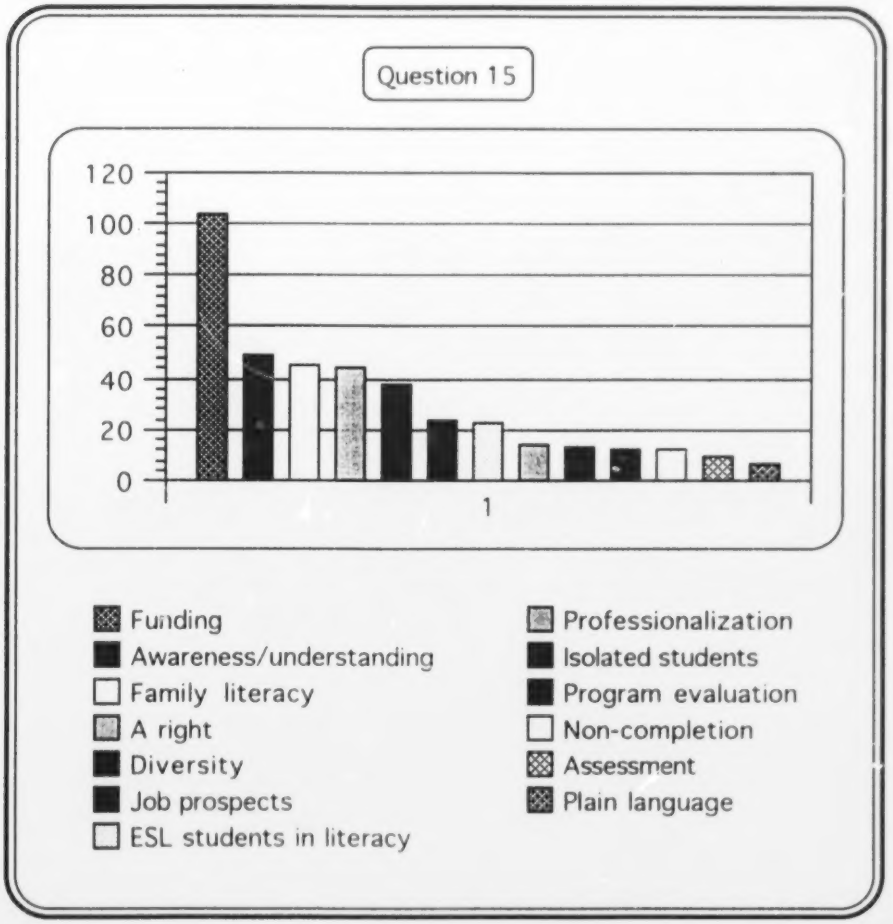
Figure 4: Perceptions of Public Understanding of Literacy



While all of the following issues are of concern to literacy workers in Alberta, respondents were able to select only the three they considered most important. The issues are ranked below in descending order (also see Figure 5):

1. Funding (selected 104 times)
2. Awareness and understanding by the public (49)
3. Family literacy (45)
4. Literacy as a right (44)
5. Diversity of programs and approaches (38)
6. Future job prospects for graduates (24)
7. ESL students in literacy programs (23)
8. Professionalization of the field (14)
9. Physically and/or geographically isolated students (13)
10. Program evaluation (12)
10. Non-completion by students (12)
12. Assessment of students (9)
13. Plain language (7)

Figure 5: The Literacy Issues of Most Concern to People in Literacy In Alberta



Conclusions

Cross-Canada Survey

Literacy hotlines in Canada are new. The oldest started little more than five years ago. Several have started within the last year, partly in response to ABC Canada's literacy advertising campaign. At the same time, however, every province in Canada except Alberta has tried or is trying a provincial hotline. Currently, all provinces have provincial coverage except Newfoundland, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Literacy hotlines vary widely in form and function. Hosts can be literacy coalitions, individual literacy programs, or government departments. Although funding most often comes from the provincial government, it may also be joint federal/provincial money or private donations. Hotlines may be provincial or regional, including large cities in the latter. While some operations focus on referring students and volunteers to programs, others offer a wide range of services, and might be more accurately called something like a literacy contact centre or a non-instructional literacy centre. Few hotlines are intended to give advice to literacy workers. Some hotline services include publishing a newsletter. In answering calls, hotline operators use a variety of resources, which are updated at various intervals. The number of calls received varies from few to many, and the principal callers vary from the general public, to volunteers, to literacy students, to ESL students, to literacy workers.

Literacy hotlines can fail. Publicity is crucial. The many calls received by the B.C. Contact Centre are in large part due to the extensive television and radio campaign conducted. Both Newfoundland and Calgary reported sizable increases in calls whenever ad campaigns began. Publicity is particularly important when a hotline is starting up. Calls to the fledgling New Brunswick hotline dropped to zero when the first ad campaign ended (*Literacy Network News*, 1993). Such drastic decreases do not occur once a hotline has made its presence felt. When

the Calgary Adult Literacy Awareness Project ended, its hotline received approximately two calls a day for nearly a year afterwards (I. Stanley Tober, personal communication, September, 1993).

Alberta Survey

Conclusions from the Alberta survey will be drawn as follows: state a possible hotline function, suggest a desired state of affairs (DSA), describe the present state of affairs (PSA) based on the survey data, and draw a conclusion about the extent to which the hotline function is needed. Each conclusion is stated in the first person singular in order to emphasize that you may draw somewhat different conclusions from the data. Examining all seven possible functions leads to a general conclusion about whether a hotline service is needed, and if so, what shape it should take.

● *A hotline service could refer students to programs.* The DSA is that every program be full. Presently, half of the literacy programs are full or are full with a waiting list. The other half, however, could use more students. Yet the number of students required is probably not great. Most of the programs not full say they are at approximately 75% capacity. Most programs that could enroll more students are rural and much smaller that the typical urban program. Generally, a moderate effort was made to recruit the present enrollment. This does not necessarily mean that literacy workers can simply increase their recruiting efforts and fill the last remaining spaces. The survey does not allow us to say why moderate effort was made, nor whether rural literacy coordinators are able or willing to expend more time and energy recruiting.

A related enrollment issue, too complex for the questionnaire, is whether students are in the most appropriate programs. Where students have a choice, literacy workers know from experience that many students select programs on severely limited criteria: "My friend went to school here last year," "My social worker said come here," or "This is the only program." Because one quarter to one half of incoming students will drop out, and because "coming back to school" may be their last gamble on education, students might benefit from a service providing them with the information to make a well-informed choice so that they get into the most suitable programs. That said, because most of the urban literacy

programs are full (Bell, 1991b), students may take whatever class they can get into first, not waiting for the one most appropriate to their needs.

Respondents ranked referring students to programs as the most important hotline function.

Conclusion? I think there is a **moderate need** for a hotline to function as a student referral service.

● *A hotline service could refer volunteers to programs.* The DSA is that programs have all the volunteers wanted. Presently, 41% of the respondents report that their programs have 100% or more of the volunteers desired. Most of the rest have 75%. Typically, volunteers were recruited with moderate effort.

A possible DSA is better matching of volunteers and programs. Generally, literacy programs are not particular about volunteers. To use a contrasting example, if a university student wants to tutor in a writing center, he or she will generally have to show three positive letters of reference, good grades, proof of writing competence, and the interpersonal skills required in a face-to-face interview with a director. If literacy programs become more particular about volunteers, a hotline might help place volunteers. What skills besides reading ability does the volunteer have that might be wanted by a particular program? Does the volunteer's philosophy match the program's? Will the volunteer most likely get what he or she wants out of working in the program? Answering such questions could lead to a better match between volunteer and program.

Referring volunteers to programs was ranked as the fourth most important of the seven possible hotline functions. This middle ranking accurately reflects the mixed opinions respondents had. Rankings were clustered equally at second, fourth, and last, suggesting that some people think the function is important, others are more neutral or undecided, and others think it rather unimportant.

I think there is a **small need** for a hotline service to refer volunteers to programs.

● *A hotline service could provide general literacy information to the interested public.* The DSA is that many people call for information, that the literacy workers providing the answers give accurate and timely help, and that taking the calls does not interfere with their other literacy work. Fifty-five percent of the respondents said that they received 1–3 calls per week from the general public wanting literacy information, 75% of literacy workers felt they had adequate resources to give satisfactory assistance, and 63% said that calls from the general public about literacy did not interfere at all with their other work. Several people wrote on the questionnaire that answering such calls was part of their job.

Provided that the level of calls from the public is considered adequate, I think there is **almost no need** for this hotline function. However, many literacy workers say that much more needs to be done about the public's awareness and understanding of literacy issues; therefore, the level of calls is probably inadequate. If awareness and understanding efforts are increased, there will be a **moderate need** for a hotline service to provide general literacy information to the interested public.

● *A hotline service could provide specific information to people in the literacy field.* For example, literacy workers could call regarding job opportunities, new publications, upcoming literacy events, and so on. The DSA is that literacy workers be well informed about literacy news. While 8% say they are very well informed and 48% feel fairly well informed, 22% of respondents chose "so-so" and another 22% say they are rather or very poorly informed. Although 10 respondents identified this information function as the principal service they wanted from the hotline, and another 18 placed the function second, 24 rated the function least important, and another 27 next to least important. This function was ranked sixth overall.

Although a considerable minority of literacy people have some dissatisfaction with their level of information about Alberta literacy news, it is not clear that a hotline is the best way to address this need. A hotline requires the ill-informed to recognize that they lack information on something and then phone for clarification. Adequate distribution of clear information in the first place would seem to be the principal priority. I think there is a **small need** for a hotline service to provide specific information to people in the literacy field.

● *A hotline service could provide educational advice to literacy workers.* For example, a tutor and literacy coordinator who have run into a problem with a student might phone for advice on the next step to take, a good reference to consult, and so on. This is not far-fetched. In public school education, teachers need four years of training just to teach the regular curriculum, and often at least two additional years of specialized training if they want to work with high risk students. Similarly, in pharmacy, practitioners must have four or five years of training in order to practice, and an additional two or three years if they want to work with patients who do not respond as expected to the normal medication regime. In adult literacy we deal with similarly complex situations yet seldom have preparation of a similar magnitude. Consequently, one version of the DSA is that literacy workers have a ready avenue of consultation. Half the respondents reported that in the last month, they had never faced an adult literacy problem for which they had inadequate access to professional consultation. The other half said they had, but usually only 1–3 times. This hotline function was rated the lowest.

I think there is **essentially no need** for a hotline service to provide educational advice to literacy workers.

● *A hotline service could try to raise public awareness of literacy issues.* The DSA is that the public be highly aware of adult literacy as an issue. Forty-five percent of respondents read their communities as being fairly aware or highly aware of the issue. However, 55% said their communities were slightly aware or completely unaware. Although public awareness has increased over the last 10 years, it still has a way to go. And, given the ubiquitous "flavour-of-the-month" syndrome, the gains the literacy movement has made in awareness over the last few years may slip away if literacy is not kept in the public eye.

Conclusion? I think there is a **moderately strong need** for a hotline service to raise public awareness of literacy issues.

● *A hotline service could try to increase public understanding of literacy.* A better understanding might include identifying the causes of adult literacy problems, recognizing the effects, and seeing a variety of viable solutions. The DSA is that the public has an excellent understanding of literacy, the rationale being that literacy would then receive more and better support. Significantly, not one of 130 respondents said that

people in his or her local community had an excellent understanding of adult literacy. And 85% said the understanding was poor or almost non-existent. Respondents ranked "awareness and understanding by the public" second only to "funding" as the issue of most importance to adult literacy over the next three years.

I think there is a **strong need** for a hotline service to increase public understanding of literacy.

As a general conclusion, there does seem to be a need for a provincial hotline service in Alberta, but only if it takes a certain shape, making its first priority public awareness and understanding, and its secondary concern referring students and volunteers to programs.

Recommendations

Although it is entirely up to the AAAL Board to decide what to do next, I have been asked to make my personal recommendations.

***Recommendation*: Now that a need has been established and defined, move to investigating the feasibility.** Is there enough funding for enough years to warrant starting the needed service?

***Recommendation*: Create a definite picture of what it is that you want to be feasible. The hotline operation should be a proactive service aimed at increasing public understanding of literacy.** This is excitingly innovative. It might involve defining "understanding," identifying current understanding, specifying better understandings, and piloting ways to foster them. Awareness would be a natural part of the operation, although not the principal focus.

***Recommendation*: Make referring students and volunteers to programs a secondary purpose.** The person working for awareness and understanding must be aware of what is happening in the literacy field and understand the different perspectives. Furthermore, when campaigning for literacy, questions inevitably arise about programs, questions about what programs have openings, and what programs need volunteers. The two purposes are naturally linked, but not equal.

***Recommendation*: In defining the focus of the hotline service, consider the most salient needs of the literacy field in Alberta.** The top five ranked literacy issues in the questionnaire indicate some fruitful areas for the hotline service to work on. What is the relation between public awareness and understanding and funding? How can the hotline service best work with the Family Literacy Action Group director? What does it mean to say that literacy is a right, and how should this topic be broached with the public? And what is the relationship between the diversity of programs and public awareness and understanding?

***Recommendation*: Rather than hiring a consultant such as myself to explore the feasibility, hire the person who will run the hotline service if it goes ahead.** Because this is a most likely one-person operation, the person hired is crucial. The person's qualifications should suit the specific purposes of this hotline operation. In order, the person should have expertise in (1) public relations, (2) fund raising, and (3) literacy. Because this combination is rare, the person hired will probably need training. As part of any training, the person should visit the B.C. Contact Centre. Probably housed in the AAAL office in Calgary, part-time or full-time, the person's initial priority would be to raise funds.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Cross-Canada Survey

Survey of Selected Hotline-Type Services in Canada

February 24, 1994

Dear Respondent:

The purpose of this survey is to describe accurately a variety of hotline-type services across Canada. This is part of a needs assessment that I am conducting for the Alberta Association for Adult Literacy to help the organization decide whether a 1-800 provincial literacy hotline is needed, and , if so, what shape it should take. With the help of Scott Dickson of ABC Canada, I have chosen one or two hotline-type services in each province. Please answer the few questions attached and return the questionnaire by March 4 to

Jim Bell
Bell Education and Consulting
3712-31 St. SW
Calgary, AB T3E 2P7
Phone/Fax (403) 246-6702

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact me.

If you would like to send your latest annual report, brochures describing your service, or anything else that would help us get a clear picture of your literacy hotline service, we would appreciate it.

I would be happy to send you the results of this survey if you are interested.

Thank you for the help.

Jim Bell

Survey of Selected Hotline-Type Services in Canada

Organization:

Address:

Hotline number:

Telephone:

Fax:

Contact person:

Person responding to this questionnaire:

---

1. Briefly describe your set-up for the hotline-type service. Specifically:

a) Who answers the hotline telephone? (e.g., volunteers, a professional answering service, etc.)

b) What days and hours is the service available?

c) What do you use for a "referral book"?

d) How often is the referral book updated?

2. How many hotline calls do you receive per year?

3. What proportion of your calls are from the following groups?

_____ Potential literacy students or persons calling on their behalf

_____ Potential English as a Second Language students or persons calling on their behalf

_____ Potential volunteers

_____ General public seeking general knowledge about literacy

_____ Literacy workers seeking specific literacy information

_____ Literacy workers seeking advice

_____ Other (please specify)

4. Which of the following services does your hotline provide? (Check the services that apply.)

_____ Refer interested adults to literacy programs

_____ Refer interested adults to English as a Second Language programs

_____ Refer potential volunteers to programs

_____ Provide general literacy information to the interested public.

_____ Distribute literacy information to the literacy community

_____ Provide advice to literacy workers

_____ Raise public awareness and understanding of the adult literacy issue

_____ Other (please specify)

5. How are you funded? If funded from more than one source, please indicate the proportion of funding received from each.

Thanks again.

Appendix B: Alberta Survey and Literacy Results

BELL EDUCATION AND CONSULTING
3712-31 St. SW, Calgary, AB T3E 2P7
Phone/Fax (403) 246-6702

March 4, 1994

Dear Respondent:

The purpose of this survey is to find out whether a toll-free, province-wide literacy hotline is needed. The Alberta Association for Adult Literacy (AAAL) has asked for the survey. The Literacy Coordinators of Alberta (LCA) and Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL) know about and support the survey. In the selection of the research sample, you have been chosen.

The AAAL Board members need your help in determining whether a 1-800 provincial hotline should be set up. As one of the people who has the necessary information, you have been selected to give input into the decision. The decision is major. Your input is crucial.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the enclosed, stamped, addressed envelope within the next three days so that it arrives by the deadline of March 18. Your responses are strictly confidential.

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jim Bell

P. S.

The first 100 completed questionnaires received will be eligible for one of the prizes donated by AAAL:

1st Prize Pine Candle Adult New Reader Series
2nd Prize Three free memberships to AAAL
3rd Prize *Great Canadians Close to Home* (2 copies)

Hotline Survey

1. Please *place a check mark* in the box beside the description which best fits your role in the literacy or ESL field.

❑ Literacy Administrator/ Coordinator	75
❑ English as a Second Language (ESL) Administrator/ Coordinator	14
❑ Literacy Instructor/Tutor	37
❑ ESL Instructor/Tutor	14
❑ Literacy Student	15
❑ ESL Student	24
❑ Other (please specify): (3 Literacy, 1 ESL, and 6 Unknown/Other)	10

n=189

INSTRUCTIONS:

***Administrators/Coordinators**—Please answer **Part A** and **Part B**.*
Questions are phrased as if you administer one program. If you administer more, please regard the questions as referring to all of your literacy or ESL programs.

***Instructors/Tutors**—Please answer **Part B** only.*

***Students**—If you happen to receive this survey, please answer questions **#10, 13, 14,** and **15**.*
***Others**—Please answer questions in **Part A** and **Part B** as applicable.*

NOTE:
Several of the following questions ask about "adult literacy or ESL." Please answer the one that applies to you.

PART A: Administrators/Coordinators Only

Instructions: To answer the questions, put a check mark in the appropriate box: ❑

2. Some programs have an official limit to the number of students in relation to the amount of program funding received. Other programs have an unofficial limit above which, in the administrator/coordinator's estimation, program quality will suffer. Either way, which of the following best describes your current program enrollment?

❑ 25% full	4
❑ 50% full	10
❑ 75% full	23
❑ 100% full	11
❑ 100% full, with potential students waiting	25

n=73

3. In your opinion, how much effort did your organization expend last year on attracting learners to your program?

❑ Very little effort	14
❑ Little effort	11
❑ Moderate effort	31
❑ Considerable effort	15
❑ A great deal of effort	6

n=77

4. ABC Canada is currently conducting a promotional campaign for adult literacy. It features a "Learn page" in most Alberta telephone directories, and advertisements on television and radio. Consider the number of telephone calls to your program in February 1993, and compare this with the calls to your program in February 1994. How much has the number of calls changed?

❑ Decreased 100% or more	0
❑ Decreased 75 %	0
❑ Decreased 50%	1
❑ Decreased 25%	4
❑ No change	48
❑ Increased 25 %	14
❑ Increased 50%	4
❑ Increased 75%	1
❑ Increased 100% or more	2

n=74

5. At the moment, your program has what percent of the volunteers it wants?

❑ 0%	1
❑ 25%	4
❑ 50%	8
❑ 75%	28
❑ 100%	15
❑ 100%, with potential volunteers waiting	14

n=70

6. In your opinion, how much effort did your program expend last year on attracting volunteers?

❑ Very little effort	15
❑ Little effort	7
❑ Moderate effort	25
❑ Considerable effort	16
❑ A great deal of effort	9

n=72

7. In a typical week, how many calls do you answer in which a member of the general public, but not a potential student or volunteer, wants general information about adult literacy or ESL?

❑ 0	19
❑ 1-3	42
❑ 4-6	8
❑ 7-9	1
❑ 10 or more	6

n=72

8. When you answer calls from the general public asking about adult literacy or ESL, do you have adequate resources to give satisfactory assistance?

❑ Definitely inadequate	4
❑ Somewhat adequate	8
❑ So-so	7
❑ Fairly adequate	38
❑ Definitely adequate	20

n=77

9. To what extent do you feel that calls from the general public regarding adult literacy and ESL interfere with your other work?

❑ Not at all	46
❑ Little	18
❑ Somewhat	8
❑ Greatly	1

n=73

PART B

10. Please *rank* the following possible hotline functions in order of importance, 1 being the most important and 7 being the least important. (Use each number, 1 to 7, only once.)

3_____ Increase public understanding of literacy and ESL issues
1_____ Refer students to programs
5_____ Provide general literacy and ESL information to the interested public
7_____ Provide educational advice to literacy and ESL workers
6_____ Provide specific information to literacy and ESL workers
4_____ Refer potential volunteers to programs
2_____ Raise public awareness of literacy and ESL issues

Instructions: To answer the questions, put a check mark in the appropriate box: ❑

11. To what extent do you feel informed about Alberta adult literacy or ESL news (e.g., job opportunities, new publications, events, funding sources, and professional development possibilities)?

❑ Very poorly informed	5
❑ Rather poorly informed	21
❑ So-so	26
❑ Fairly well informed	57
❑ Very well informed	9

n=118

12. In the last month, how many times have you faced an adult literacy or ESL problem and felt that you had inadequate access to professional consultation?

❑ 0	58
❑ 1-3	46
❑ 4-6	6
❑ 7-9	6
❑ 10 or more	2

n=118

13. How **aware** is your local community (e.g., town) of the issue of adult literacy or ESL?

❑ Unaware	10
❑ Slightly aware	64
❑ Fairly aware	54
❑ Highly aware	6

n=134

14. Being aware that a problem exists is different than understanding it, that is, different than identifying the causes, recognizing the effects, and seeing workable solutions. How well do people in your local community (e.g., town) **understand** adult literacy or ESL?

❑ Almost no understanding	25
❑ Poor understanding	85
❑ Good understanding	20
❑ Excellent understanding	0

n=130

15. *Place check marks* beside the **three** issues you think will be most important for adult literacy or ESL in Alberta over the next three years?

# 8_____	Professionalization of the field	14
# 7_____	ESL students in literacy programs	23
# 5_____	Diversity of programs and approaches	38
# 3_____	Family literacy	45
# 2_____	Awareness and understanding by the public	49
# 12____	Assessment of students	9
# 11____	Non-completion by students	12
# 13____	Plain language	7
# 4_____	Literacy as a right	44
# 10____	Program evaluation	12
# 6_____	Future job prospects for graduates	24
# 1_____	Funding	104
# 9_____	Physically and/or geographically isolated students	13
_____	Other (please specify):	10

(The 10 issues specified under Other are on the following page.)

❑ Yes, I would like to be eligible for one of the great prizes donated by AAAL.

1st Prize Pine Candle Adult New Reader Series
2nd Prize Three free memberships to AAAL
3rd Prize *Great Canadians Close to Home* (2 copies)

Name:

Program:

Telephone: Fax:

Other Issues

Understanding of structure and limitations of literacy programs by other professionals i.e., unemployment counsellors, etc.

Heavy demand for program due to cutbacks in other adult education programs

Identification of and willingness of student to learn

The approach of the current government to addressing the deficit and the effects of cutbacks on all the people with whom we work as well as on those who work in the field. This is broader than program funding.

Children having difficulty in school due to cutbacks--causing adult literacy problems later in life.

Literacy issues dealing with the disabled community, i.e., deaf and hearing-impaired, and blind.

The push for "accountability" i.e., quantitative data instead of qualitative data (stories of people's lives)

Separate ESL entirely from Literacy. Many Canadian are illiterate, not too many immigrants if at all.

The political messes made by the Provincial and Federal Gov'ts re: language training.

Technology: the information highway.

Appendix C: Alberta Survey and ESL Results

Hotline Survey

1. Please *place a check mark* in the box beside the description which best fits your role in the literacy or ESL field.

❑ Literacy Administrator/ Coordinator	75
❑ English as a Second Language (ESL) Administrator/ Coordinator	14
❑ Literacy Instructor/Tutor	37
❑ ESL Instructor/Tutor	14
❑ Literacy Student	15
❑ ESL Student	24
❑ Other (please specify): (3 Literacy, 1 ESL, and 6 Unknown/Other)	10

n=189

INSTRUCTIONS:

***Administrators/Coordinators**—Please answer **Part A** and **Part B**.*
Questions are phrased as if you administer one program. If you administer more, please regard the questions as referring to all of your literacy or ESL programs.

***Instructors/Tutors**—Please answer **Part B** only.*

***Students**—If you happen to receive this survey, please answer questions **#10, 13, 14,** and **15**.*
***Others**—Please answer questions in **Part A** and **Part B** as applicable.*

NOTE:
Several of the following questions ask about "adult literacy or ESL." Please answer the one that applies to you.

PART A: Administrators/Coordinators Only

Instructions: To answer the questions, put a check mark in the appropriate box: ❑

2. Some programs have an official limit to the number of students in relation to the amount of program funding received. Other programs have an unofficial limit above which, in the administrator/coordinator's estimation, program quality will suffer. Either way, which of the following best describes your current program enrollment?

❑ 25% full	1
❑ 50% full	3
❑ 75% full	2
❑ 100% full	4
❑ 100% full, with potential students waiting	3

n=13

3. In your opinion, how much effort did your organization expend last year on attracting learners to your program?

❑ Very little effort	1	
❑ Little effort	3	
❑ Moderate effort	6	
❑ Considerable effort	3	
❑ A great deal of effort	1	n=14

4. ABC Canada is currently conducting a promotional campaign for adult literacy. It features a "Learn page" in most Alberta telephone directories, and advertisements on television and radio. Consider the number of telephone calls to your program in February 1993, and compare this with the calls to your program in February 1994. How much has the number of calls changed?

❑ Decreased 100% or more	0
❑ Decreased 75 %	1
❑ Decreased 50%	0
❑ Decreased 25%	0
❑ No change	12
❑ Increased 25 %	1
❑ Increased 50%	0
❑ Increased 75%	0
❑ Increased 100% or more	0

n=14

5. At the moment, your program has what percent of the volunteers it wants?

❑ 0%	4
❑ 25%	1
❑ 50%	0
❑ 75%	3
❑ 100%	5
❑ 100%, with potential volunteers waiting	0

n=13

6. In your opinion, how much effort did your program expend last year on attracting volunteers?

❑ Very little effort	6
❑ Little effort	3
❑ Moderate effort	3
❑ Considerable effort	0
❑ A great deal of effort	1

n=13

7. In a typical week, how many calls do you answer in which a member of the general public, but not a potential student or volunteer, wants general information about adult literacy or ESL?

❑ 0	2
❑ 1-3	11
❑ 4-6	0
❑ 7-9	1
❑ 10 or more	1

n=15

8. When you answer calls from the general public asking about adult literacy or ESL, do you have adequate resources to give satisfactory assistance?

❑ Definitely inadequate	0
❑ Somewhat adequate	4
❑ So-so	1
❑ Fairly adequate	6
❑ Definitely adequate	4

n=15

n=45

15. *Place check marks* beside the **three** issues you think will be most important for adult literacy or ESL in Alberta over the next three years?

# 6_____	Professionalization of the field	10
# 2_____	ESL students in literacy programs	27
# 6_____	Diversity of programs and approaches	10
# 4_____	Family literacy	16
# 4_____	Awareness and understanding by the public	16
# 13____	Assessment of students	1
# 10____	Non-completion by students	6
# 11____	Plain language	5
# 6_____	Literacy as a right	10
# 12____	Program evaluation	3
# 3_____	Future job prospects for graduates	20
# 1_____	Funding	31
# 9_____	Physically and/or geographically isolated students	7
_____	Other (please specify):	3

❑ Yes, I would like to be eligible for one of the great prizes donated by AAAL.

1st Prize Pine Candle Adult New Reader Series
2nd Prize Three free memberships to AAAL
3rd Prize *Great Canadians Close to Home* (2 copies)

Name:

Program:

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